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THE SCIENCE OF HISTORY AND THE HOPE OF MANKIND

BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

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Vinaya-Kumāra Sarkār

BY

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PREFACE

THE present work is based on the Lectures on the Science of History which I delivered to my classes in History at the Bengal National College, Calcutta. My object was to survey, not historically but according to the philosophico-comparative method, the phenomena of civilisation and point out the laws or generalisations that may be deduced out of the facts of universal history.

Human civilisation, like physical facts and phenomena, requires to be studied in such a way as to lead to the detection of uniformities in the

sequences and co-existences of social events and movements. History has to be put on the same level with physics and other natural sciences, so that predictions may be possible in the social world as in the physical.

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B. K. SARKAR.

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SECTION I

PROBLEMS OF HISTORY

MANY strange things have happened in the history of the world. There have been cases in which the efforts of individuals or societies have been directed towards the spread of a new religion, but the result has been the creation of a new state or the making of a powerful military community. Sometimes the ruling classes or the subjects have endeavoured to raise the status of their country by developing its secular and political interests, but a new religious system with its peculiar dogmas and doctrines has displaced the old mythology and renovated the spiri-

tual life of the people. Many instances are recorded of conflicts between states which ensue through certain bones of contention, but which have been concluded by treaties settling quite different problems. The succession question owing to vacancy of the throne in one state has often been the occasion of a world-wide struggle and led to the alteration of the political boundaries of several states. There is a dynastic and political rivalry between two princes, but altogether new and unheard-of peoples slowly and silently acquire a place in the polity of nations.

While, again, philosophers and theorists have been engaged in the diffusion of a new thought or the devising of measures for the cultivation of the arts and sciences, the advancement of learning and the spread of

education, the people have been blessed with the acquisition of the privileges of self-government, democracy, and free constitutional life. Or, perhaps, the politicians and statesmen have been actively agitating for introducing reforms into the Legislative Assemblies and National Councils, the whole-hearted devotion of some of the ablest men of the country has been applied to the discussion of the best systems of election and representation, the study of the proper relations between the rulers and the ruled, or the determination of the duties of the governors and the rights and privileges of the governed, but in the meanwhile there has emerged a new consciousness among the people, the sign of a new life, through honest intellectual curiosity and scepticism, a taste for inde-

pendent thought and discussion, and the rise of a new Literature and Science.

In fact, traces of the beginnings of movements are seldom to be met with at the close. There have been many movements which were started under the impulse of a hope of industrial improvement and commercial success, but which have ended in a new arrangement of social forces giving rise to modifications in the character and extent of the State. Political regeneration has often been the objective, but the result has been the development of national wealth. Or, again, the establishment of uniformity in religious life and thought has been the spring of an individual's action, but the annihilation of a whole people's industry and commerce has been the con-

sequence. While sometimes patriots have confined their ambition solely to the mere establishment of a constitutional form of government by limiting the rights of the sovereign and extending the privileges of the subjects, they have been startled by more momentous results than were within their ken, viz., the declaration of an absolute autonomy and national independence. In one state the sovereign commits a political or a strategic blunder, but in another kingdom a political revolution is effected and a limited monarchy takes the place of the old regime of royal absolutism. Two states are measuring their strength against each other, but a third and an altogether independent state comes into the whirlpool of their politics and undergoes the fate of

double or triple partitions among the neighbours.

Observers of such freaks of Nature in the phenomena of the human world are naturally expected to doubt if there be any law or definite principle governing man's progress and decay. If the affairs of man are very strange and have no natural and necessary connection between one another, if the rise and fall of nations, the propagation of religions or the extinction of industries, the loss of liberty or the foundation of a constitution are really the results of accidents and cannot be foreseen, what can possibly be the aims and ideals of human life, what the sources of inspiration that may encourage man in his struggle for existence? How would a nation that has been for some time a contributor to

the world's culture and civilisation try to maintain its dignity and prestige? What are the means by which an infant or a degenerate community can hope to rise to the standing of advanced nations? Is there any good in the efforts and energies of agitators, martyrs, and missionaries? What is the value of the work and perseverance of religious preachers, and social reformers, patriots, and philanthropists?

SECTION II

THE SCOPE AND FUNCTION OF HISTORY

ANSWERS to such queries regarding the hopes and the future of mankind are to be expected of the historian. But of late the cultivation of learning has been considerably guided by the principle of the Division of Labour. The tendency has been towards a breaking up of the province of knowledge into several departments and the relegation of each to a separate treatment, with the result that the sciences have become specialised and their scope greatly narrowed.

Historical studies, also, have been attacked by this principle of isolation and specialisation, and have had their

boundaries confined exclusively to the facts and phenomena of the *statal* life of a people. Workers in the field of history consider their sole responsibility to be the study of only the political affairs of a community, *e.g.*, administration of the state, international diplomacy, wars and treaties, expansion and secession of territories, growth or decay of the sense of nationality or political unity. Only such facts or principles as are directly or indirectly connected with the political aspects of human life receive their whole attention and absorb their total activity. The tendency of historians nowadays is to neglect completely the study of the influences on State of Man's domestic, social, industrial, religious, and intellectual life, and of the diverse effects on

human life and institutions of the working of the political machinery. For this is considered to be the function of special classes of scholars, *e.g.*, sociologists, economists, and pedagogists.

The introduction of the principle of Division of Labour in the cultivation of science has no doubt led to rapid growth and development of the several sciences, and by differentiating and rigidly demarcating their scope and function has helped forward the speedy realisation of the end of each. But this differentiation and limitation of the range of study has been attended with the necessary evils and imperfections of the consequent diversity and multiplicity. For the absence of uniformity and of synthetic comprehensive treatment is unfavour-

able to the discovery and formulation of universal principles and fundamental laws that may be generalised out of the facts and phenomena of the world. History has, thus, on the one hand, been able to supply out of its general stock special facts and materials for an altogether new branch of learning, viz., Political Science, and has thus contributed to the richness and variety of human knowledge. But these specialised activities have, on the other hand, withdrawn the attention of scholars from the study of the hopes and aspirations of man, the progress and decay of civilisations, and the ultimate gains and losses of humanity.

Man is not wholly a political animal, and therefore the state alone is not the sole indicator and standard in regard to human happiness and misery. No

knowledge about man can be complete until and unless it is based on a study of all human passions and tendencies, institutions and activities. And so history must necessarily be incomplete and quite unable to guess the future destiny of mankind or to suggest the lines of advance suitable to any stage, so long as it does not concern itself with the whole of human life and its thousand and one manifestations. The historian, therefore, will have to use at every step the laws of life and living organisms. Biology is thus the true basis of Sociology and the science of History. Founded on the science of Life, History will be competent to formulate clear and definite principles about the course of human progress, the development of society and the evolution of civilisation.

SECTION III

THE SCIENCE OF LIFE

THE development of all living organisms is effected through certain energies and substances that are conducive to the growth and manifestation of life. It is the environment and physical surroundings that supply these life-sustaining factors to the organisms. And this physical universe is not only the feeder and sustainer of living beings, it is also the field of their activity as well as the abode in which they grow and reproduce themselves. Hence the action and reaction between the living organism and the environment regulate all the conditions of its life-history.

Now, all those forces and materials that constitute the environment, *e.g.*, light, heat, air, water, soils, food substances, etc., are not equally necessary to the life and development of every organism; in fact, some are positively harmful and injurious to its interests. Besides, among the living beings themselves there are relations of mutual alliance and rivalry. It is the interaction and resultant of all the forces of Nature, both favourable and unfavourable to life, that determine the development and growth of every individual organism. And so the form and characteristics of every living being depend on the nature and strength of these contending forces.

Thus, in the vegetable and animal worlds the varieties of form and colour, structural and external characteristics,

the habits of life and habitats, movements of limbs and other organs, as well as the methods of reproduction and rearing, are all influenced by and adapted to the varying conditions of the environment. The plants and animals of land as well as water have different modes of life and forms of body adapted to their different abodes and surroundings. Terrestrial plants and animals, again, display diversity of structure and characteristics owing to the variety of sets of favourable and unfavourable circumstances amidst which they are placed.

The maintenance of life as well as the propagation of the species, also, do not depend solely on the individual life of the organism. In fact, every aspect of its life is influenced by the whole environment surrounding it.

The operation of the manifold forces of nature, the attempts of each organism to utilise the environment according to its own needs, and the modification of its organs through the assimilation of the surrounding substances—all contribute their quota to its special growth and development. The life and individuality of each single organism are controlled and influenced by the sum-total of all those processes and products of Nature that arise out of the needs of every other organism for growth and development. And the modifications in the living world owing to the mutual alliance and rivalry of the organisms as well as the new forces that are being perpetually created by the eternal struggle for existence in the universe have their part to play in moulding the life-history

of every organism. No organism can realise its individual perfection absolutely independent of all other organisms. All the world-forces are jointly responsible for every manifestation of the life of an organism, so that the development, liberty, and degeneracy of one are inextricably bound up with the development, liberty, and degeneracy of all other organisms. This is the fundamental truth about the sphere of human beings.

Human life is also in this way influenced and controlled by the forces and substances in the universe. The growth, development, and liberty of Man depend on the resultant of all the mutual relations between the various agencies of the social and physical environments. It is the interaction of all friendly and inimical world-forces

that gives to each human being its peculiar external characteristics and endows it with its proper mental and moral outfit.

Thus the formation of society as well as the creation of state, organisation of education as well as the cultivation of letters, the institution of religious practices as well as the foundation of institutions, in fact, all aspects of human life, are influenced and modified by the social and physical atmosphere in which man is placed, and vary with the varying circumstances that diversify it. Just as plants and other lower organisms display diversity of structure and characteristics in order to adapt themselves to the play of diverse agencies in the universe, so man also manifests various aspects of life and character

under various sets of influences, takes recourse to various modes of living, and preserves his continuity and individuality under various forms adapted to the varying conditions of the social and physical world. The state, religion, literature, and other manifestations of human life assume in this way different characteristics of form and spirit under different circumstances.

The motive of man in having recourse to social and physical changes of his organism is to adapt these manifestations and weapons of life to the varying needs and conditions of the struggle for existence. Political movements as well as religious propagandism, planting of colonies as well as the development of industries, are thus regulated by the play of a thousand and one forces to which human life is

subject in this universe. The growth in prosperity and freedom of a community or the decay of its life and liberty does not depend solely on its own needs of advancement and progress, and is not effected solely by the working of its own resources.

No man can ever exist by ignoring any one of the forces and materials that make up the world he lives in; he has to reckon the agencies that are perpetually influencing himself as well as other men. A study of the conditions of other men is thus the means to a proper understanding of his own situation in the struggle for existence. And, similarly, in the case of a community or a people, the first problem in the struggle is to discover the friends and foes—the favourable and unfavourable circum-

stances that may co-operate with or militate against its growth and development; for all its arrangements and organisations will have to be adjusted to the requirements thereby suggested.

The progress and degeneration of any of the races of men are thus the indirect effects and subsidiary results of the development of mankind as a whole. What an individual nation regards as the principal factor of its own progress, as the chief and indispensable element of its own glory, is nothing but a mere by-product of the general process of the whole of human affairs. Thus considered, national achievements and self-realisations at any one epoch are only some of the symptoms of the total world-culture of the age;—and though ends in themselves from the standpoint of race-

consciousness, are mere means to, or unlooked-for consequences of, the situation of the human race at the time. The growth or decay of a literature and the acquisition or loss of liberty are, no doubt, of momentous consequence to the life and fortunes of a nation; but in respect of the grand consummation of human civilisation these are temporary and accidental phenomena, intimately connected with the multitudinous ups and downs of a thousand other communities.

The prosperity and adversity, growth and decay, as well as freedom and subjection of each individual community at any one time, in one word, the destiny of each nation acts and is acted upon by the conjuncture of all the forces of the Universe. And this is created by the international

relations of the epoch and indicated by the position of the political and social centre of gravity of the world brought about by them. Hence, for a proper understanding of any of the conditions of a single people, it is absolutely necessary to realise the whole situation of the human world at the time, and minutely study the array of world-forces that has been the result of mutual intercourse between the several peoples in social, economic, intellectual, and political matters.

SECTION IV

THE WORLD-FORCES IN ANCIENT AND MEDIÆVAL HISTORY

THE chief centres of ancient civilisation were India, Persia, China, Egypt, Babylon, and Greece. The contribution of each of these to the culture of humanity was greatly influenced and modified by its intercourse with the civilised and barbarous peoples of the other parts of the world. Besides being controlled by these sociological factors, the freedom and subjugation of countries, as well as the opulence and adversity of peoples in the ancient world, depended also on the climatological and agricultural conditions of the several

habitable tracts, as well as the physical and natural means of defence from foreign inroads. These social and physical conditions of the surrounding universe are responsible for the wars and alliances, inter-mixtures and inter-marriages, religious *rapprochements* and territorial expansions, industrial developments and ethnical assimilations that make up the Drama of Ancient History.

Such inter-racial connections and mutual intercourse between peoples of various origins have left their stamp on the culture and civilisation of the Egyptians and Babylonians. So also Hellenic civilisation was not an isolated growth, but was the product of the world-influences of the classic age. The little city-states of Greece developed their peculiar type of life

and thought under the conditions supplied by the states of antiquity as well as the contemporary "barbarians." Their colonial and military systems, their commercial policies, their political unions and confederations, were the direct outcome of Phœnician, Egyptian, and Persian influences. The various stages in the history of the Roman Republic were likewise influenced both in form and spirit by contact with the life and thought of the innumerable peoples who came under the sway of the Romans.

The manners and customs, religious institutions and social practices, as well as the art and literature of India, owe their special characteristics to the social, economic, political, and religious intercourse of India with the peoples of Tibet, China, and the diverse neo-

Greek states, as well as the influence of multifarious aboriginal and non-Aryan rites and ceremonies. In like manner the literature and life of the kingdoms of the Hellenistic world that came into being under the movement for the expansion of Greece begun by Alexander were the outcome, in varying degrees, of the contact between the East and the West; and in politics as in philosophy, industrial as well as social life, represented the processes and products of the assimilation that was consciously at work under the altered conditions of the world.

In this way the individuality and peculiar type of social and literary life of each of the ancient nations of the world were developed simultaneously with, and even as the results of, the individuality and nationality

of the other peoples. All the types of ancient culture evolved their special structural characteristics and differentiated themselves into separate socio-political crystals by influencing and modifying one another, and hence may be looked upon as more or less the joint-products of certain systems of world-forces.

The kaleidoscopic changes that marked the state-systems of the Middle Ages were likewise due to the stir and turmoil produced by social and political intercourse of peoples with one another. Those very barbaric races who had during the preceding epochs excited the military ambition of the established powers, whose very existence had, in fact, taxed the strategic ability of the rulers of the border-lands and frontier-provinces,

were under the new conditions no longer despised as being outside the zone of civilisation, but had to be received by the civilised nations as members of the same system of life and thought.

The same influence that had led to the migration of the Aryans in primitive times were now at work in making the Teutonic tribes leave their original homes and seek new settlements and careers in unknown and untried lands. While the process of "barbarising" was going on in one quarter of the globe, a camel-driver of the Arabian deserts promulgated a new faith, and under its impulse innumerable tribes and sub-tribes started on a career of religious fanaticism. The result was that the old centres of civilisation in Europe and Asia became Teutonised

and Islamised and began to be the seedbeds of new thought and culture.

The political boundaries of the states of Mediæval Asia and Europe had to undergo rapid changes. The decline and fall of the Roman Empire, formation of new independent states, the gradual establishment of autonomy in Britain, Gaul, and the Iberian peninsula, wars of religion and expansion of theocracies, rise and development of Saracenic kingdoms, fall of ancient states and creation of new state-systems in India, revolts and secessions throughout the length and breadth of the known world, destruction of liberties and loss of autonomies, origin of new principles of unity and association—in fact, all those ceaseless transformations that characterise the stirring times—received their peculiar

stamp and trend by being thrown into the midst of one another, each having left its mark on the others. The explanation of each of these is to be sought in the same sets of forces that were engendered by the grand whirlpool of human affairs; and, so, all are to be regarded as members of one and the same system of world influences. Conquests and subjugations were the order of the day; and the Teutonic victories in the Romanised world as well as the Saracenic conquests in Roman and non-Roman Europe and the various parts of Asia were the outcome of the same socio-political environment. The subjugation of Britain by foreigners is the European counterpart of the same movement that led to the overthrow of the Hindus in certain parts of India

by the followers of Islam. Subjection and independence, progress and degeneration, national achievement and decay were not the fruit of the activities of individual peoples, and cannot be explained solely by the heroism or degeneracy of the nations themselves. These were not the results of isolated movements, but were the joint-products of the whole process of human affairs.

SECTION V

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND NATIONAL ADVANCEMENTS IN MODERN TIMES

IT is also a fact that the fortunes of all those peoples who in modern times have contributed to the glory and wealth of human civilisation by winning their independence and autonomy from the grasp of foreign rulers, or by limiting the rights and powers of the sovereigns, were not made by their own efforts alone, but were mainly directed by the conjuncture of circumstances and the environment of forces and opportunities that were created by the mutual alliance and rivalry of the other nations.

Take, for example, the declaration of Dutch Independence, which towards the close of the sixteenth century threw a new power into European politics.

The power and prestige of the Spanish Habsburgs, the rulers of the Netherlands, had for a long time been on the wane. The monarchs of France, having consolidated their kingdom, were extending their arms of conquest and expansion, and so came into natural conflict with the Spanish Emperor, over whose dominions the sun never set. The Holy Roman Emperor was a Habsburg, and hence his relative, but had no sympathy with the proselytising Catholicism of the Spanish autocrat. The diplomatic Elizabeth of England also pursued a religious policy which ran directly

counter to the Catholic Emperor's system of persecution.

In the meantime the Inquisition, set up by Philip II. to establish religious uniformity and centralise both politics and religion, had the baneful effect of crushing the national industries, by compelling the Protestant and Moorish artisans to seek refuge in the hospitable anti-Catholic countries. Economic resources having been thus hollowed out by the expulsion of the skilled labourers and organisers, the finances of the Empire presented a miserable condition. Thus just at the time when the people of the Netherlands, unable to bear the political and religious tyranny, were organised for war under the most patriotic and desperate leaders, the despot's sinews of war had become effete and inefficient.

Add to this the division of energy that was necessitated by the simultaneous conflict with England and the possibility of a breach with France, and we get an idea of the manner in which the decay of Spain, and the political ascendancy of France, industrial and commercial developments of Protestant countries, and the political and religious independence of the Dutch Republic, came about as the joint products of the same system of European politics. We cannot explain the rise of one people without reference to the fall of another, or the economic prosperity of one if we neglect the political triumph of another.

Just as the interests of the whole of Europe were involved in the continental affairs that ultimately led to the absolute autonomy of the Nether-

lands and the decadence of the Spanish Habsburgs, so also the Revolution of 1688 which led to the dethronement of James II. and the establishment of constitutional monarchy in England was only one of the indirect and accidental consequences of those series of European movements which were organised against the absolute Cæsaro-papism of Louis XIV., *le grand monarque* of France, through the instrumentality of his personal rival, William Prince of Orange.

This "glorious Revolution" was not effected in England in the interest of herself and through the heroism of Englishmen alone, but was simply a means to the ends of a foreign hero. The European situation had come to such a pass that even the Pope of Rome had to accept liberal tendencies

and sympathise with the Protestant movements. Louis' policy of religious centralisation had been rapidly robbing the Pope of his secular and political influence, and so the head of the Roman Catholic Church found it expedient to side with the Calvinistic William, as the champion of European liberties, and even oppose James II., the most extreme of all the advocates of Catholicism.

As the German Emperor had for a long time been involved in Turkish politics, and Spain had become paralysed, the hope of Europe for deliverance from the all-seizing ambition of the Grand Monarch rested on the national resources of England and the heroism and organising ability of the Prince of Orange. But England could not be made to take part in the

general European conflict until the constitutional struggle between the King and the people was brought to a satisfactory close, and the miserable policy of the later Stuart kings of seeking subsidy and help from the French monarch was abolished and replaced by the practice of receiving grants from the Parliament by timely concessions.

One of the first tasks of William's life-work was, therefore, the accomplishment of the English Revolution. It was thus only a stepping-stone to the grand European mission of his life; at once a concomitant and a means to the general continental movements of the time.

Martin Luther started his scheme of religious reformation in the sixteenth century; it took about a century and a

half to bring the religious disputes of Europe to an end. But the wars of Religion were not solely the outcome of the spiritual needs of humanity. These contests were inspired and directed by the needs of political and economic advancement which the various princes and peoples of Europe wanted to secure from the secular ambitions of the head of the Roman Church.

Thus the arrangement of the several powers into neutrals, allies, and belligerents was dictated not simply by religious considerations but by their financial, industrial, and political interests. The Reformation was, in fact, a political necessity, and national churches were the inevitable counterparts of nation-states. Consequently lovers of economic independence and

national unity began to range themselves on the side of religious toleration and freedom of conscience; and so not only theologians and religious leaders, but statesmen and politicians, educationists and literary men as well, regulated the movements of the times. And so the Peace of Westphalia settled not only the religious disputes, but solved also some of the political problems of the age and determined the boundaries of Spain, France, Prussia, Sweden, and Holland.

The ascendancy of Sweden during the Thirty Years' War, and her gradual decadence in later times, as well as the development of Russia and Prussia as independent powers in the state-system of modern Europe, were due to circumstances created by the inter-

national relations of all states. The rivalry of the French monarchs with the Austro-Spanish Habsburgs, the predominance of France as *the* power in Europe and dictator in European politics, and the conflicts of the German Emperors with the Turks, gave the Markgrafs of the borderlands of the Empire and the Slavs of the outlying regions opportunities to acquire an independent status in international diplomacy. The rising into importance of these puisne states necessarily limited the range of the ambition of the older peoples and circumscribed the field of their activity. In this way the decay of Sweden, Austria, and Turkey, the humiliation of the Emperor, wars of the Reformation, and the rise and development of new powers were due to the mutual influences upon one

another, and hence the combined results of the same set of conditions.

So also the recent liberation of Greece from the suzerainty of Turkey, and the revolutions that have led to the establishment of the modern German Empire as well as the unification of Italy into one nation, are not at all due to the unassisted and unhindered enterprise of the peoples concerned, but were the consequences of the numerous favourable and unfavourable circumstances produced by the complexities of European politics.

The peculiar international diplomacy of England, Russia, France, and Turkey, by which each was pursuing its own interests according to opportunities, gave rise to such an arrangement of the political forces, and such a distribution of the powers

of Europe into foes, friends, and neutrals, as led inevitably to the freedom of Greece and revolutions in France, Germany, and Italy.

The gradual acquisition of privileges by the Hungarians from the German Emperors, and their ultimate achievement of national autonomy and self-rule, cannot be explained solely by the patriotism and martyrdom of heroes like Tokoli and his successors. Hungarian independence was, in later times, the result of the same forces and processes that had previously led to the formation and recognition of Prussian monarchy as an independent power in German history and general European politics. The eternal conflict of the German Empire with Turkey, and subsequently with Russia, as well as the secession of Prussia

from its jurisdiction, and the consequent weakening of the Holy Roman Emperors, are the causes of that shifting of the centre of gravity in the oldest empire of the world, which is responsible for the new species of European polity, viz., the Dual Monarchy of Austro-Hungary. The expulsion of Austria from the German political system, and its co-ordination with Hungary, one of its foremost dependencies, are thus inextricably bound up with Prussian and Turkish politics.

The fact that Turkey, though infidel, is still an independent unit in modern European politics is not to be explained by the innate strength of the Moslem national character. It is rather due to the change in the viewpoint of European politics that dreads

Slavonian ambition more than the pagan's intolerance. The conflict between the East and the West, the hatred of the European towards the Asiatic, the spirit of crusade against the Oriental religion, which were the mediæval reproductions of the classical anti-Persian enthusiasm, have in recent times given place to the desire for security and protection of the national autonomies of European powers against the encroachments of modern Russia, and the recognition of the safety of Turkey as the concern of combined Europe.

In fact, most of the non-Christian and Asiatic states that have been still preserving their independence in modern times are to be regarded as buffer-states; and the expediency of extending helping hands to the

pagan nations, or of maintaining studied neutrality against Russian politics, is paralleled by the policy of the Pope, who in pursuance of his secular and political interests never scrupled to ally himself with Protestant princes and peoples, even against the greatest champions of his own religious system.

The fact is that just as it is impossible for man to preserve his existence solely on the strength of his own psycho-physical system, but he has every moment to depend on the non-self for the forces and materials that supply food to his mind and body, and hence he can maintain his life and individuality so long as he is fit enough to utilise the environment in his own way; so also nations can maintain their existence and peculiar national

character only so long as they are fit enough to profit by the thousand and one physical and social influences that constitute the environment of nations in the world. It is impossible that a people should develop its life and liberty by ignoring or neglecting the mutual alliances and enmities between the several peoples of the human society. It is impossible that a nation should be able to acquire or preserve freedom and prestige solely on the strength of its own resources in national wealth and character. Every people has to settle its policy and course of action by a careful study of the disposition of the world-forces, and the situation of the political centre of gravity at the time.

It is this development of nations through international relations, and

the dependence of national destiny on the character of the surroundings, that explain why so many things in the history of the world seem to be accidental, strange, and sudden. In reality, these accidents in the phenomena of national rise and fall, as well as the variations of national character, are regulated by laws and are interconnected as causes and effects, whether remote or direct, both in space and time.

SECTION VI

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE FORMS OF GOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY

WE shall see that not only states, but administrative systems and forms and methods of government also are influenced and modified by the surrounding conditions of the world. As the State has its origin in the furtherance of the interests of a people, it grows and develops through the action and inter-action of the diverse antagonistic and parallel forces of social life; and consequently it has to adapt its organisation and governmental machinery to the varying circumstances of the environment.

The insular position and natural

boundaries of Great Britain and the United States of America preserve them from foreign aggressions, and this explains why the principle of protection of the people *from* the Government operates in these countries more powerfully than that of protection *by* the Government. And the centralised despotism of Louis XIV., which has been formulated into the memorable dictum, "I am the state," is due to quite contrary physical and social conditions of France in the seventeenth century, viz., the danger of the safety of the state owing to weak barriers. The strong military rule and Cæsarism of the founders of the Prussian monarchy was an absolute necessity when the small nucleus of political life was surrounded by enemies on all sides.

Religious intolerance and persecution in European history and the enforcement of a rigid system of uniformity in religious theory and practice were inevitable when the peoples of Europe were emerging from the conditions of feudalistic disintegration to the new national and unified socio-political existence. A strong monarchy exercising sway over all the spheres of human life was the only means of removing the decentralisation due to diversity and multiplicity of independent states, cities, and principalities. This need of national unity and homogeneous compacture is responsible for the suppression of independence in thought, speech, and action, and accounts for the remarkable preponderance of the states in Spain, France, England, and in more recent times in Prussia and Russia.

But freedom of thought and action, and toleration of diversities and disunions were encouraged in India, and the almost absolute independence and autonomy of the ancient village republics were preserved here up to the modern age, owing to the vastness and physical immensity of this "epitome of the world," which presented unsurmountable obstacles to the employment of the principles of Imperialism and consolidation, and necessarily gave ample scope for the application of *laissez-faire* and let-alone in religion, society, politics, and industry.

Besides the external conditions, internal circumstances also regulate the form and spirit of the administrative machinery of a state. Lycurgus' military-pedagogic state was the direct and conscious result of the existence

of innumerable Helots and other original settlers who were enslaved by the Dorians in the land of their adoption. The unruly and fanatical character of subjects has to be met by a tyrannical and inquisitorial form of government. "Kings have to be tyrants from policy when the subjects are rebels from principle." The existence of diversities in religion, tribe, and language also necessitates the adoption by rulers of a policy of absolutism in the interests of peace and security of the whole territory under their sway.

The "rights of man" and the principles of liberty, fraternity, and equality created opportunities for the rise of Napoleon; but he began his career by restoring the *ancien régime* which it had been the first work of the

Revolutionists to overthrow. Napoleonism becomes a political necessity when revolutions and disorders are imminent; and not sympathy of the people but their terror is the object aimed at by the rulers. So also "Special Tribunals" and "Councils of Disorder," martial laws, and a thousand other engines of repression have always to be resorted to by successful revolutionists in order to crush the old order of sovereigns. The history of the French Revolution is a record of coercions and counter-coercions, by the successively rising governments, of the parties just overthrown. Even religious orders, societies for the promotion of economic good, and philanthropic organisations have to adopt a powerful repressive policy in order to concentrate their

own strength and assert their own position in the society against the despotism of established customs and vested interests. Enforcement of strict discipline and principles of military organisation is the sole means of binding together the members of a new organisation for the furtherance of national interests. The rigorous pedagogic morality among the Calvinists and the repression of all individuality among the Jesuitical orders were the inevitable consequences of their position and responsibility as the pioneers and organisers of new movements.

SECTION VII

RELATIVITY OF RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND OF OTHER ASPECTS OF HUMAN LIFE TO THE CONJUNCTURE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

WE have thus seen that the social and physical surroundings of man leave their stamp on the character and extent of the state as well as the spirit and form of government. The same influence of the environment is to be noticed on the other manifestations and aspects of human life as well. Just as the lower organisms assume different shapes and characteristics under the varying conditions of the physical world and preserve their identity

and continuity under different forms adapted to these conditions, so also human life undergoes a variety of transformations according to the divergence of the influences and circumstances in the physical and social worlds.

A new religion was preached by Mahomet in the seventh century. The world at the time of his advent was divided into innumerable principalities, the Roman and the Persian Empires being mere bundles or confederacies of independent Consulships and Vizierships. But the unity of godhead preached by the Arabian prophet became a cementing bond to the diverse tribes and nationalities, and forthwith began the process of the overthrow of old and the rise of new kingdoms. In this way the formative

principle of one of the most powerful Empires of the world was supplied by the birth of a religion.

So also the teachings of Christ, which were at first practised and developed by a small coterie of religious-minded men, acquired, under the conditions of the world, such secular and political influence, that about the time of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, the Church organisations of the Christian society alone were the real political authorities, and discharged all the important functions of the secular states. The new Teuton conquerors of the old Roman provinces had to place themselves under the tutelage and guardianship of the Church dignitaries in all matters, secular as well as theological, educational as well as

economic. The Frankish Empire of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire of Otto the Great were the handiworks of such "theological politicians" and "political theologians." And gradually a time came when the Popes were the dictators of European politics, and controlled not only the religious but the political and financial affairs of the Empire and the kingdoms. Such secular presumptions and political aggrandisement of the religious Empire are the root-causes of the interminable international conflicts and civil wars of the Middle Ages, and intensified the disruptive forces of the feudal regime.

Christianity and Islam thus prospered, not solely because of the needs of moral regeneration and spiritual

advancement; but the real cause of their rapid progress and development is to be sought in that unifying force of religion as a principle of association which, under the existing conditions of the world, supplied some of the real needs of humanity. It is the absence or degeneration of all other institutions and organisations for the furtherance of the social, political, educational, and industrial interests of man, that necessitated the transformation of these religious associations into secular and military states. The origin of such a theocratic state out of a merely spiritual community has been exemplified in Indian history in the case of the Sikhs, who, rising as a peaceful sect for the discovery of the means of spiritual emancipation and tran-

scendental freedom from bondage, were compelled by the force of circumstances to seek deliverance from temporal thraldom and organise independent secular kingdoms and military states like *Misls* and *Khalsas*.

Manifestations of life change according to variations in the environment, and the state and religion alone are not the sole aspects of man. Human life consequently manifests itself sometimes in arts and literature, at other times in political conflicts and religious movements. It is this need of adaptation to circumstances, again, that explains the varieties in the type of philosophical and social systems of the different ages, and accounts for the divergences between Manu, Aristotle, and Bacon as teachers of humanity and pioneers of progress.

Movements and revolutions as well as the truths established by them assume different shapes according to the different factors of human society.

It is because of this diversity of manifestations of the vital principle that national life is not necessarily extinguished with the mere decay and extinction of political existence. The life of a people may under the force of circumstances have to cease to express itself in the field of economic activity and reveal itself in religious propagandism, or ceasing to seek realisation and development in industrial movements, may manifest itself in literature and art, or at times display its fulness and strength in martial or educational enthusiasm.

This influence of the pressure of circumstances on the form of life's

activity is to be seen also in the various aspects that the same ideal assumes in different departments of human enterprise. Thus what is extremism in general thought and philosophy is idealism in art and literature; is transcendentalism and mysticism in religion; assumes the form of Socialism, a desire for equality and creation of opportunities for the fullest development of *all* in socio-economic matters; and lastly, becomes in politics the principle of democratic recognition of the rights of every individual. Thus the Rights of the Individual, established by the French Revolution in the field of political action, have led to the declaration of the privileges of the proletariat and the lower classes of society, have made literature and art spiritual and romantic, have established

religion on the solid ground of social service and philanthropy, and by giving an impetus to bold, independent thinking have succeeded in revolutionising the Sciences.

SECTION VIII

RECAPITULATION

RECAPITULATING, then, the lessons of the Science of History founded on Biology, we find that neither literary movements nor political agitations, neither the acquisition of liberty nor expansion of territories—in fact, none of the various aspects of national life are absolutely dependent on the particular people concerned, all are the products and *resultants* of the mutual influences of all nations and national activities on one another; so that types of national character are moulded through constant interactions and intercourses of life and thought. In the second place, these

international actions and reactions assume different aspects in different times and thus give rise to different nationalities of the human race and *different types* of national characteristics. In the third place, the *manifestations of life* that give rise to various national types and different national characteristics are always varying both in form and spirit according to the varying conditions of the world; so that so long as man will be able to adapt his movements to the varying circumstances of the environment, there is no need of despair for the progress of humanity.

SECTION IX

THE WORLD'S GREATEST MEN

BUT there is a fundamental difference between man and the lower organisms as regards the relations with the environment. Though, no doubt, it is the conditions in the surrounding world that mould and modify the life and form of every living organism, it is man alone of all created beings that can make his own environment and create the opportunities, or, at any rate, rearrange the forces of the world, according to needs of his own development. Even unfavourable circumstances may be converted into useful instruments of his proper growth and progress.

It is possible for man to realise

"what is not," to extend an empire over the physical and elemental forces of the world, to transcend the limitations of time and space, and regulate them so as to make them conform to his own needs, and by elevating the status of society to bring about a millennium in religion and philosophy. The history of civilisation is the record of man's will-power that has achieved unexpected and almost impossible results, by transforming unfit and inefficient peoples into some of the strongest nations of the world. Idealists and men of strong will-power like Alfred the Great, Lorenzo de Medici, the preachers and prophets of new ideas, the Roman Catholic Jesuits, Frederick the Great of Prussia, and Peter the Great and Catherine of Russia have succeeded in infusing a new spirit

into the minds of their generations, and enabled them to rise in the scale of nations by adapting themselves to the circumstances of the times. Religion, industry, state, education, and literature have been consciously transformed by the heroic efforts of such great men of the world, and these conscious and artificial transformations of the several aspects of social life have been the constituents of a new environment and thus the seeds of Renaissance.

Thus it is not the forces and conditions of the existing world alone that govern human affairs and control the fortunes of movements, for these forces and conditions themselves may be modified, re-arranged, and regulated by man so as to give rise to new circumstances and situations. The causes of revolutions lie

mostly in the power of transforming the surrounding conditions, *e.g.*, that by which man can alter the relation of the world-forces with one another and bring about new international arrangements. It is such creations of circumstances and new conditions in the environment that are really responsible for the diversity of national fortunes during the same age, *e.g.*, industrial revolution in one country but political decadence in another, or religious propagandism among one people and literary enthusiasm among another; as well as for the diversity of movements and agitations among the same people in different ages.

This creation of new circumstances and transformation of the existing conditions, again, explain the diversity of revolutions and the types of

revolutionists in the history of the world, and account for the facts that the centre of gravity of civilisation has been at one time placed in India, at other times in China, Egypt, Greece, and so forth, and that Hindus, Musalmans, and Christians have been in diverse times the "chosen races" of God. The fact that modern Europe has witnessed successively the hegemony of Spain, France, and England, and is at present the theatre of international diplomacy and armed neutrality between Germany, Russia, and England, is to be explained by the diversities in world-politics that have been created by the series of facts of far-reaching consequence, such as the royal marriages of the Habsburgs, bigotry and intolerance of Philip II., protection and toleration of Elizabeth,

conquests and expansion of the French monarchy, commercial rivalry between the East India Companies, births of great men and rise of new ideas in Europe, desire for national self-assertion and idealistic self-sacrifice, progress of "enlightenment" and rationalism, as well as the sense of responsibility of pioneers that make up the several scenes of this complex drama.

This possibility of the transformation of the environment, again, can explain the revolution in ideas, manners, and sentiments that may take place in human society under the forms of Theism, Scepticism, Christianity, Islam, Imperialism, Commercialism, Democracy, and Socialism. This, again, is responsible for the failures of many political revolutions, and accounts for the fact that national regeneration and

political advancement have in all places had a long and chequered course.

Ideals and phenomena of civilisation, then, are what man makes them to be, and not the chance-creations of fortuitous conjuncture of circumstances. They are the products of environments, in the making and regulation of which human will and intelligence, political rivalry and commercial jealousy, desire of self-assertion and amelioration of national condition, play a considerable part. Man is always utilising the forces and materials supplied by the physical and social environment, re-arranging the particles of the universe, creating new situations out of old, giving rise to new environments for new problems, and thus helping forward the opening up of new chapters of universal history.

SECTION X

THE OUTLOOK

THE interests of modern mankind are hanging on the activities of the "barbarians" of the present-day world, who, by altering the disposition of the forces of the universe, are silently helping in the shifting of its centre of gravity to a new position; and on the transcendental heroism of those great men who are equipping themselves for the magnificent career to be built up by utilising the conditions thus created. The pioneers of the future progress and advancement of humanity are those heroes who will be able to make the most of the inevitable changes that constitute the life-history

of the world, and create new situations by timely and skilful readjustment of world influences. And so long as there is one man in this universe capable of opening up new fields and discovering new opportunities by making the necessary modifications and re-arrangements, so long humanity's cause will continue to be broadening from "precedent to precedent," and the interests of mankind widening through revolutions and transformations to "one increasing purpose" with "the process of the suns."

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